



Funded by
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Expression of Interest for Experts

DRG4FOOD – Open Call #2

*[Under HORIZON-CL6-2022-GOVERNANCE-01-10, project number:
101086523]*

14.05.2024



Executive Summary

This document provides essential information for prospective evaluators interested in participating in the DRG4Food project's Open Call #2. DRG4Food, a Horizon Europe initiative, seeks to foster responsible data-driven innovations in the food sector. The document outlines the project's objectives, application and selection process, evaluator responsibilities, and key timelines. It emphasizes the importance of experts' impartiality, adherence to data protection regulations, and their commitment to the project's goals. Prospective evaluators will find details on eligibility criteria, workload expectations, and the selection process.



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1 Introduction to DRG4Food

Food safety, security, sustainability, reduction of food waste and fairness throughout the food chain are at the heart of Europe's food strategy. Digitally enhanced approaches to more transparency in the food chain are crucial. The EU-funded DRG4Food project (*Under HORIZONCL6-2022-GOVERNANCE-01-10, project number: 101086523*) will develop and demonstrate a set of solutions including a roadmap and a structured open funding program. The experienced consortium partners will provide measures and tools that will guide the selection of relevant technology enablers for the development of digital tools and potential solutions for the food ecosystem of third-party beneficiaries, citizens and stakeholders. To create a data-driven food system, the project aims to set new standards by taking orientation in the European Digital Rights and Principles and the Digital Responsibility Goals.

The overall goal of the DRG4FOOD project is to achieve trust in a data-driven food system by implementing Digital Responsibility Goals (DRGs) in the design, development and operation of digital technologies and solutions for the food sector. This will enable new levels of innovation for example in food safety, sustainability, personalised nutrition, reduction of food waste and fair conditions throughout the entire food chain. The project shall serve as a blueprint for a data ecosystem based on responsibility, transparency and trust across the European food supply chain. The programme works on a clear strategic roadmap (a new virtual food system), a set of technological enablers, demonstration of solutions, a structured funding programme with open calls, and measures to guide and support a responsible digital transformation for the food ecosystem.

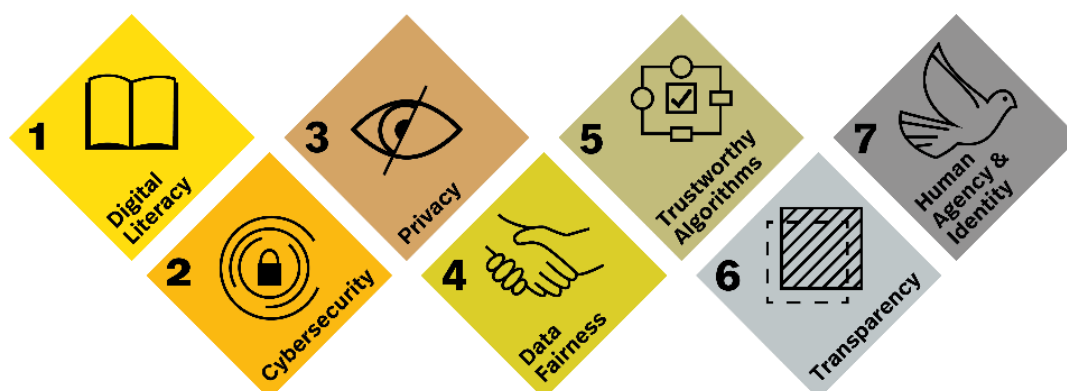


Figure 1 Overview of the Seven Digital Responsibility Goals as applied by DRG4Food

To achieve this objective, the DRG4FOOD project will combine i) recent research about trustenhancing measures, technologies, and new architectures for managing personal and other data, resulting in an aspects' map and a digital responsibility playbook; ii) a structured funding program with open calls inviting stakeholders, including individuals, SMEs, foundations, etc., to contribute to the design, development and operation of technology enablers, digital tools and solutions and iii) demonstrations of technical solutions via a toolbox 'cataloging' approach. As a starting point, the consortium will perform a map&gap analysis to investigate existing and emerging technological solutions in the field of nutrition and food traceability.

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1.1 DRG4Food Open Call #2

The DRG4Food Open Call and the pilot program embody an innovative initiative focused on fostering responsible data-driven baseline enabling technologies within the food sector. It aligns its objectives with the Digital Responsibility Goals, with a focus on empowering citizens, championing data rights, and promoting sustainable food systems.

Scheduled from April 22nd to June 21st, 2024, the DRG4Food Open Call #2 welcomes multidisciplinary consortia, including startups, SMEs, research institutions, and food sector entities. The primary areas of interest are food tracking, targeted nutrition, and consumer food choices.

DRG4Food ensures a transparent and rigorous evaluation process, with proposals subject to comprehensive review based on predetermined eligibility criteria (see figure 2). The assessment covers various aspects, including technology excellence, innovation, data responsibility, business viability, and consortium capabilities.

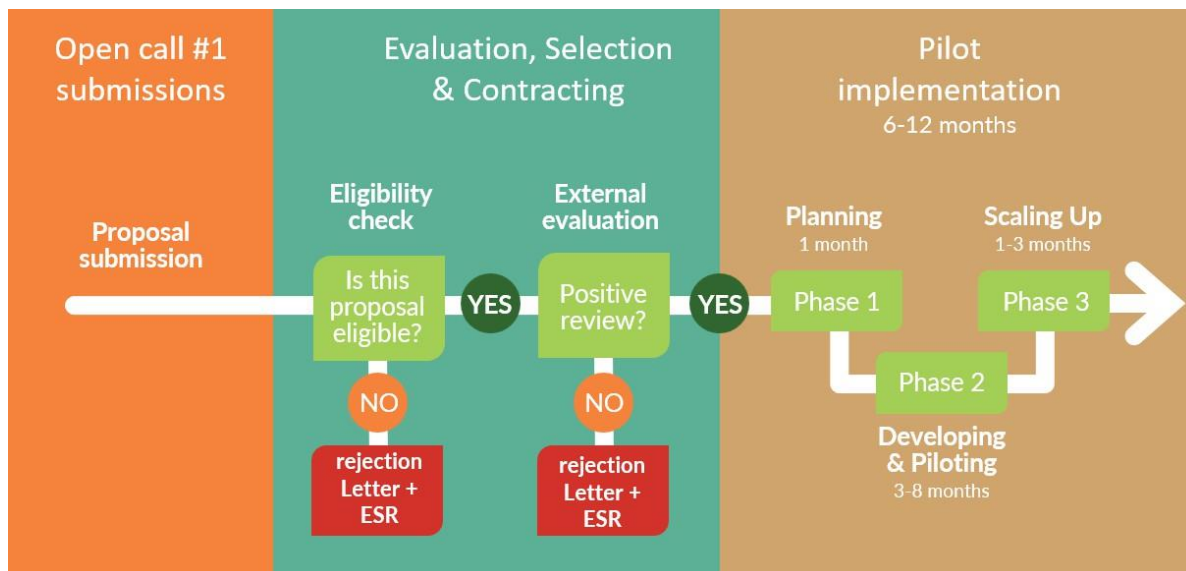


Figure 2 DRG4Food Open Call Flow: Nurturing Responsible Data-Driven Food Innovations

DRG4Food has allocated a budget of €973,134.50 for Open Call #2. Each selected project must provide a detailed budget proposal within the specified range. The funding will be divided into three phases, encompassing different stages of project development, from planning to market introduction.

Successful projects receiving funding from DRG4Food will become integral members of the DRG4Food pilot program. They will gain access to a wide range of resources, including guidance materials, digital responsibility tools, and specialized support in areas such as business development, investor readiness, and communications.

With its structured approach and commitment to digital responsibility, the DRG4Food program seeks to drive innovation and promote sustainable practices in the food sector. Ultimately, it aims to contribute to a future where data-driven solutions enhance the well-being of citizens and uphold the integrity of global food systems.



2 Expression of Interest for Experts

DRG4Food is initiating a call for expressions of interest, seeking accomplished and independent experts to participate in the evaluation of proposals submitted for the DRG4Food first Open Call. The consortium aims to establish a diverse pool of professionals with expertise critical to the success of the DRG4Food project.

The chosen experts will bear the responsibility of appraising proposals, with a specific focus on key domains including the food sector, targeted nutrition, consumer food choices, and innovative services adhering to principles of openness, sovereignty, fairness, and trust. We anticipate evaluators to contribute their insights and practical experience from technical realms like food science, nutrition, supply chain management, as well as from fields encompassing social sciences, humanities, economics, and environmental science, aligning with DRG4Food's visionary objectives.

This document streamlines the expression of interest process for experts eager to engage in the evaluation of proposals submitted to the DRG4Food first open call. Their responsibilities will span from July 1 to July 12, 2024, encompassing comprehensive proposal assessment.

Experts are expected to provide their services independently, free from any representation of a company or organization. Section 3 provides detailed information regarding expectations and responsibilities. The project consortium encourages potential experts to submit applications, ensuring strict adherence to eligibility criteria outlined in section 4.2. The selection process prioritizes openness, transparency, and the consistent delivery of high-quality evaluations for all proposals.

Submitting an application is a prerequisite for those aspiring to become experts within the DRG4Food program. However, it is imperative to understand that the application process does not guarantee participation, as final selection hinges on the project's specific needs and compliance with formal requirements. Selected experts will be obliged to sign a contract and a non-disclosure agreement. Access the application form at <https://www.f6s.com/drg4food-evaluators-call-2>.

Becoming an expert evaluator at DRG4Food offers a unique opportunity to contribute to the advancement of food-related technologies and services, fostering innovation and supporting sustainable practices within the food sector. It's a chance to be part of a transformative initiative that shapes the future of food and nutrition, promoting sustainable and impactful data-driven innovations in alignment with the Digital Responsibility Goals (DRGs).



3 DRG4Food Experts

3.1 Evaluation tasks

The evaluators for the DRG4Food project play a critical role in assessing the submitted applications, ensuring a balanced focus on both the technical/scientific and business dimensions. Their evaluation will encompass a range of key areas, including:

- **Technological Excellence and Innovation:** Evaluating the novelty and technical soundness of the proposed solutions.
- **Commitment to Data Responsibility, Transparency, and Conformity with DRGs:** Assessing how well the applications align with data responsibility, transparency standards, and Digital Responsibility Goals (DRGs).
- **Business Value and Sustainability, Growth Potential, and Impact:** Looking at the long- term viability, potential for growth, and the overall impact of the proposed solutions.
- **Competence and Resource Management within the Consortium, Team Expertise:** Evaluating the skills, experience, and resources available within the applying consortium to ensure successful project implementation.

Detailed information about these evaluation criteria, including how to assess each aspect, can be found in the [DRG4Food Guideline for Applicants](#) (Annex A). Additionally, the selected evaluators will receive the Manual for Evaluator. These documents will serve as comprehensive guides for the evaluators, providing clarity on the entire evaluation process and outlining the compensation provided for their valuable input.

To assist the evaluators in their task, they will be provided with an evaluation framework and a scoring sheet, designed to streamline the assessment process. Additionally, an initial online meeting will be conducted to present all essential information, ensuring a transparent and efficient evaluation procedure. This kick-off meeting aims to equip the evaluators with everything they need to perform their duties effectively, contributing to the success of the DRG4Food project.

3.2 Workload and Schedule

During the assessment of proposals for DRG4Food Open Call #2, evaluators are expected to perform their evaluations in the designated timeframe:

- **July 1 – July 12, 2024**

The evaluation will unfold in two distinct phases:

- Initially, in June 2024, the Open Call Manager and Treasurer at INOSENS will undertake a review of the application to confirm that it meets the eligibility criteria set out for the DRG4Food program.
- Subsequently, the evaluators will proceed to assess the applications. Each proposal will be assessed by a minimum of two experts: one from the DRG4Food consortium and another external expert selected through the Call for Expressions of Interest.

To aid in this process, DRG4Food will supply both a set of guidelines for evaluating the proposals and a comprehensive evaluation grid, ensuring a consistent and thorough review of each submission.

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It's important to note that the number of applications assigned to each evaluator depends on various factors such as the evaluator's availability, the total number of applications received, and the number of evaluators selected for each specific open call. The exact number of applications assigned to an external evaluator will be specified in the contract between the evaluator and the DRG4Food Project Treasurer (INOSENS).

In certain unexpected situations, evaluators may be asked to review additional applications beyond their initial allocation.

Services will be provided remotely and will involve evaluation of the applications received, participation in remote consensus meetings as well as in the panel meeting to establish a ranking list of the evaluated proposals.

3.3 Working as a DRG4Food Expert

3.3.1 Place of Work

All tasks are conducted online and hence shall be performed in the Expert's usual work environment, as long as it ensures privacy and security during the evaluation

3.4 Conflict of Interest

Selected external evaluators must ensure they have no existing ties with the DRG4Food consortium or any organizations applying to the Open Calls. Prior to commencement, evaluators are required to sign agreements confirming their independence and commitment to confidentiality.

They must promptly and proactively disclose any potential conflicts of interest, whether professional, familial, or financial, and must abstain from any benefits resulting from proposal approvals. Evaluators are required to uphold this standard of impartiality throughout their appointment, confirming no conflicts exist at the time of their acceptance, and notifying the consortium immediately if any conflicts arise during the evaluation of assigned applications.

In cases where a conflict is reported or discovered, the consortium will evaluate the situation and exclude the evaluator from reviewing the affected application if a conflict is confirmed. All potential conflicts will be thoroughly examined to maintain the integrity of the evaluation process.

Further details and guidelines can be found [HERE](#).

3.5 Confidentiality

Evaluators must maintain a strict level of confidentiality throughout all phases of the assessment process. This includes keeping all details about the submitted applications, and the results of the evaluation and selection, completely private and not sharing them with anyone. Furthermore, evaluators are not permitted to use any of the ideas or concepts from the applications for their personal advantage or that of their organizations.

3.6 Remuneration

Evaluators will receive compensation at a rate of €45 per proposal reviewed, and this compensation will be provided for each proposal they evaluate. The exact number of proposals allocated to each evaluator will be established and agreed upon in advance.



4 Application and Selection Process

To join the DRG4Food project as an expert, simply submit your application through the “[DRG4Food Call for Expressions of Interest](#)” on F6S. The project consortium will get in touch with you directly to let you know the outcome of the selection process.

4.1 Open Call Submission

Applications can be submitted starting May 14, 2024, and the deadline for submission is June 14, 2024.

All experts interested in participating must satisfy the eligibility criteria detailed in section 4.2, and they need to submit their applications using the form available at <https://www.f6s.com/drg4food-evaluators-call-2>. The form provided on F6S must be used, and applicants are required to attach their CV in .pdf format as part of their submission.

Please be aware that the project cannot accept applications submitted via paper or email. All sections of the application form must be completed, and the CV must be clear, accessible, and printable.

Please review the table below to see the key dates, including the start and end of the call, the evaluation period, and when results will be announced.

Table 1 Important Timelines for DRG4Food Call #2 for Expert Roles

Start Date	May 14, 2024 (17:00 CET)
End Date	June 14, 2024 (17:00 CET)
Assessment Period	June 17, 2024 – June 21, 2024
Notification Date	June 24, 2024

4.2 Eligible profiles

DRG4Food are in search of independent evaluators who can critically assess the quality of applications submitted for the DRG4Food Open Call #2 promptly following its conclusion. Experts will be deemed eligible for the DRG4Food Call for Expressions of Interest if they meet ALL the listed criteria:

- Eligible applicants are nationals from Member States (MS) of the European Union (EU), inclusive of their outermost regions, Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) associated with an EU Member, and nationals from countries associated with Horizon Europe. A comprehensive list of eligible countries can be found [HERE](#). (Note: Residents or taxpayers in these countries are also eligible to become evaluators, even if they are not citizens.)

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- Ideal candidates should possess experience in the food sector and food sector domains, including but not limited to Food Tracking, Targeted Nutrition, and Consumers' Food Choices.
- They should bring to the table academic, technical, and/or industry knowledge about innovative services and applications that adhere to the principles of openness, sovereignty, fairness, and trust.
- Previous experience evaluating EC proposals, or a similar evaluation experience is a must.

4.3 Exclusion

Individuals who are currently facing sanctions from the European Union, including administrative penalties or exclusion from receiving EU funds, are ineligible to serve as DRG4Food experts. This includes those who are in the midst of:

- Bankruptcy, liquidation, compulsory administration, agreements with creditors, business suspension, or similar proceedings.
- Non-compliance with social security or tax obligations.
- Engaging in serious professional misconduct.
- Involvement in fraudulent activities, corruption, connections with criminal organizations, money laundering, terrorism-related offenses (including financing terrorism), child labor, or human trafficking.
- Demonstrating significant shortcomings in fulfilling major obligations under previous EU contracts or agreements, be it procurement, grants, prizes, or expert contracts.
- Guilty of irregularities as defined in Article 1(2) of Regulation No 2988/95.
- Creating an entity in a different jurisdiction with the intention to evade fiscal, social, or other legal duties in their home country. Additionally, experts will be disqualified if they are found to have provided misleading information required for participation, failed to provide necessary information, or are in a conflict of interest during the contract procedure.

4.4 Selection

The DRG4Food Review Committee will be responsible for selecting experts based on their applications submitted through F6S. This committee comprises key project roles including TWINDS as the Project Coordinator, INOSENS taking on the dual roles of Open Call Manager and Treasurer, and Privanova managing Ethics and Legal responsibilities.

The selection criteria will encompass aspects such as professional expertise and relevant experience, language skills, geographical and sectoral balance, gender parity, regular rotation, and an absence of any potential conflicts of interest. Throughout this process, the committee is committed to upholding an objective approach, ensuring non-discrimination and equal treatment for all applicants.

4.5 Experts' assignment

Experts for the DG4Food project will be strategically matched with appropriate assignments, taking into consideration several vital criteria:

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- Compatibility of the project requirements with the evaluators' area of expertise.
- Geographic considerations, ensuring that experts are not from the same country as the applicants.
- Other factors include language skills, track record, sectoral expertise, and so on.

It's important to note that the number of applications assigned to each evaluator depends on various factors such as the evaluator's availability, the total number of applications received, and the number of evaluators selected for each specific open call. The exact number of applications assigned to an external evaluator will be specified in the contract between the evaluator and the DRG4Food Project Treasurer (INOSSENS).

In certain unexpected situations, evaluators may be asked to review additional applications beyond their initial allocation.

4.6 Contracting

Unless specified otherwise, a service contract will be executed between TWINDS and the chosen evaluator to formalize the collaboration.

Before starting their evaluations, all selected evaluators are required to sign declarations of no conflict of interest and nondisclosure agreements with TWINDS, the DRG4Food Project Coordinator, and INOSSENS, the Open Call Manager and Treasurer, ensuring a fair and confidential assessment process.

5 Benefits for Experts

Get involved in the DRG4Food project and use your skills as an evaluator to help shape smart, responsible solutions in the food sector.

- **Drive Responsible Innovation:** As an evaluator in the DRG4Food project, play a vital role in shaping the future of food systems through responsible, data-driven solutions in areas like food tracking and targeted nutrition.
- **Network with Industry Leaders:** Connect with a vibrant community of startups, SMEs, and research organizations, all working collaboratively towards innovative and sustainable food solutions.
- **Contribute to Sustainable Change:** Your expertise will directly contribute to fostering sustainable practices within the food sector, aligning with the DRG4Food commitment to Digital Responsibility Goals.
- **Gain Competitive Remuneration:** Receive fair compensation for your evaluative efforts, ensuring your expertise and time are valued.
- **Enhance Your Professional Standing:** Elevate your professional profile through your association with the DRG4Food project, positioning yourself as a leader in responsible digital transformation in the food sector.
- **Be at the Innovation Forefront:** Seize the opportunity to be part of a pioneering community, expanding your professional network and staying ahead in the deep tech revolution within the food sector.



6 Other Conditions

6.1 Ownership and Use of Results

All results derived from the activities of the Evaluators will be exclusively owned by the DRG4Food project.

6.2 Protection of Personal Information

The confidentiality of experts' personal data is important to the consortium as is digital responsibility. In this context, DRG4Food partners will serve as the Data Controllers for any data submitted via the F6S platform for these purposes. The F6S platform is designed and operated in a manner that ensures compliance with The General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR). **All experts are required to agree to the F6S terms and conditions to guarantee their data protection.**

For further information on data privacy policies and security measures, please visit the F6S platform's privacy policy at <https://www.f6s.com/privacy-policy>, and to learn about DRG4Food's privacy practices, visit <https://drg4food.eu/privacy-policy/>.

6.3 Liability

By applying to the DRG4Food Call for Expressions of Interest for evaluators and registering on the F6S platform, the expert acknowledges and agrees to the following:

- Acknowledging that submitting an application or registering does not guarantee selection as an evaluator for DRG4Food Open Call #2.
- Agreeing to sign a Code of Conduct, Declaration of Honor (DoH), and any other required documents if selected to be an evaluator for DRG4Food Open Call #2.
- Verifying their availability to complete evaluations within the required timeframe and expressing willingness to attend briefing and debriefing sessions as needed, with an understanding that precise timings will be communicated for each open call.
- Committing to assess only those applications for which they have no Conflict of Interest.

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7 Contact Information

How to Apply

Submit your interest before 17:00 CET (Brussels time) on June 14th, 2024. Submit your application through the F6S platform.

[Apply on F6S Platform](#)

Need More Help?

Help Desk:

Reach out to the DRG4Food help desk via email at: opencalls@drg4food.eu

Thank you for considering this opportunity, and best of luck with your application. We are eager to potentially work together and value your interest in collaborating with us!

DRG4Food Open Call Coordination Team